

SCOTTSDALE - U.S. Rep. Harry Mitchell today highlighted the Veterans History Project at the VFW Post 3513 in Scottsdale. Mitchell was joined by local veterans and family members who participated in the project recording their personal accounts of combat service for the Library of Congress.

"As the representative of 65,000 veterans and the Chairman of the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, honoring our nation's veterans and ensuring they receive the benefits and services they have earned is vitally important to me," said Mitchell. "In getting to know and working with the veterans in our community, I have had the great honor to hear their stories of their military service to this great nation of ours. Unfortunately these stories are disappearing, especially those of our World War II veterans as they sadly pass away."

Created by the U.S. Congress in 2000, the Veterans History Project of the American Folklife Center collects, preserves, and makes accessible the personal accounts of American war veterans so that future generations may hear directly from veterans and better understand the realities of war.

Of the more than 16 million Americans who served in World War II, only about 3 million are left, most are in their 80s. The Project collects first hand accounts of World War I, World War II, Korean War, Vietnam War Persian Gulf War and the Afghanistan and Iraq conflicts. U.S. citizen civilians, such as USO workers, flight instructors and medical volunteers who were actively involved in supporting war efforts are also encouraged to share their valuable stories for the Project's archives.

One of the stories Mitchell highlighted today involves the family of Seaman First Class Frank Robert Nystrom, who served in numerous combat missions on the Submarine USS Albacore in World War II, and was killed when the vessel was sunk by a mine off the coast of northern Japan in 1944. Last year, Mitchell helped Nystrom's family, who lives in Tempe, obtain Nystrom's combat medals, which had never been formally awarded. Family members created a stirring, documentary quality video about Nystrom's life and service that was shown at a ceremony where Mitchell presented the medals. That video will be donated to the Veterans

History Project.

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